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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 001928

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR BURNS/SATTERFIELD  
NEA/SA/EX FOR AUSTIN-FERGUSON; DEPT FOR DS/IP/NEA;  
DEPT FOR DS/IP/ITA; DRL FOR A/S CRANER;  
NSC FOR ABRAMS/DANIN;  
USAID FOR DCHA, DCHA/FPP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PHUM](#) [CASC](#) [KPAL](#) [IS](#) [GZ](#)

SUBJECT: THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND MARCH 30, 2004 --  
(1400 HOURS LOCAL) -- TWO PALESTINIANS INJURED IN THE WEST  
BANK AND TWO IN RAFAH MARCH 29

THIS IS A JOINT MESSAGE FROM EMBASSY TEL AVIV AND CONGEN  
JERUSALEM.

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SUMMARY  
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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: IDF soldiers shot and injured two Palestinian suspects in al-Fuwwar village, and eight Palestinians were arrested by the IDF throughout the West Bank March 29. Settlers in Hebron uprooted part of a Palestinian vineyard and placed three caravans on the site, according to press reports. In Gaza, two Palestinians were injured in separate shooting incidents near Rafah March 29. Also on March 29, the IDF demolished one house in the Salaam area of Rafah, from which it was believed that militants had fired on IDF soldiers in the past. Marches to commemorate Land Day were held in Ramallah and Gaza City, but were smaller than expected in Gaza. End Summary.

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West Bank  
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[1](#)2. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Death: Nil.

-- Injury: IDF soldiers shot and injured two Palestinian suspects in a confrontation in al-Fuwwar village March 29.

-- Shooting: Palestinians shot at Israeli buses in the northern West Bank in two separate attacks March 29. No one was injured.

[1](#)3. (SBU) ARRESTS:

-- The IDF arrested eight Palestinians throughout the West Bank March 29.

-- One Palestinian minor was arrested March 29 at the Temple Mount for attempting to stab a policeman.

[1](#)4. (SBU) SETTLEMENT EXPANSION/EVACUATION:

-- Settlers in Hebron uprooted part of a Palestinian vineyard and placed three caravans on the site, according to press reports.

[1](#)5. (SBU) CURFEWS/CLOSURES:

-- Closure was tightened around Nablus March 29, according to Palestinian sources.

[1](#)6. (SBU) SEPARATION BARRIER:

-- Israeli workers continued to place a temporary concrete barricade on the main road through Al Ram, north of Jerusalem, along the route of the separation barrier.

[1](#)7. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- Hamas held a demonstration with about 10,000 people in Jenin March 29.

-- Marches were held in Ramallah March 30, Land Day, which is an annual day of protests against Israeli land confiscation policies.

-- Israeli security forces used tear gas to break up a pro-Yasin demonstration west of Ramallah March 29.

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GAZA  
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18. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injury: One Palestinian was shot and injured March 29 near Tel al-Sultan, when IDF soldiers in Slaw settlement opened fire, according to UNRWA.

-- Injury: One Palestinian in the Rafah re-Housing Project was injured March 29, when shrapnel from an exchange of fire in Tel al-Sultan hit him in the shoulder.

-- Mortars/Rockets/Hand Grenades: The IDF reported that one mortar was fired at an IDF outpost near Neve Dekalim March 29.

-- Shootings: The IDF reported three shooting attacks March 29; one near Khan Yunis, one south of Rafah, and one near Netzarim. UNRWA reported a total of two shooting incidents near Rafah March 29 (see "Injuries").

-- Explosions: An explosion in Gaza City March 30, reported in the Israeli media, was in actuality IAF F-16's breaking the sound barrier, according to UNRWA.

19. (SBU) INCURSIONS/DEMOLITIONS:

-- UNRWA reported that the IDF entered the Salaam area of the Rafah refugee camp March 29 and demolished one house. It was believed that militants had previously fired on IDF troops from that location.

110. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS/CHECKPOINTS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open for Palestinians.

-- Erez Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers March 30, but open for merchants and ministerial-level PA officials (with prior coordination with COGAT). UNRWA reported that 168 merchants entered Israel March 30. Diplomats in vehicles and internationals on foot were allowed to cross on March 30, although UN agencies are refusing to allow staff members to cross unless they are in vehicles. The Erez Industrial Zone was open March 30, and 3,580 laborers entered.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers March 30, but open for the import into Gaza of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was partially for the import and export of goods into the Gaza Strip March 30. Unpacked goods may enter, but no Palestinian containers may enter or exit.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for Palestinian travelers March 30.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed for residents of al-Mowassi March 30. Toufah checkpoint was open for women, children under 12 years old, and males over 35 years old.

111. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

-- Although PA and militant groups called for demonstrations March 30 in Gaza City in honor of the 28th anniversary of Land Day, UNRWA reported that turnout was smaller than expected, with approximately 2,000 marchers participating.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

You can also access this site through the State Department's Classified SIPRNET website.

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KURTZER